

NPIC/D-210/62
27 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

ATTENTION : Mr. William Tidwell

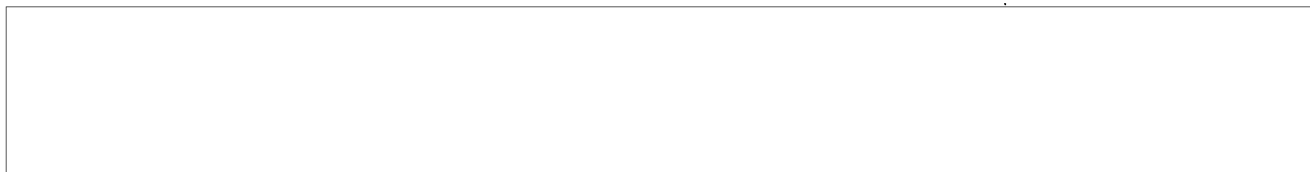
SUBJECT : Lessons Learned from the Cuban Crisis

REFERENCE : Memo to Senior Staff from Exec. Dir./CIA,
"Post Mortem of Lessons Learned," 5 Nov 62

1. As was to be expected, the change-over from CIA to military control of Cuban photo reconnaissance, coupled with the increased amount of reconnaissance, resulted initially in a number of coordination problems for the NPIC. Information on missions, flight schedules, coverage, camera configuration, etc. from the military operations center was frequently lacking. Within 7 to 10 days, most of these coordination problems had been resolved and the flow of information was quite satisfactory.

2. One of the most difficult problems for DOD during this period was the processing of large quantities of film on a timely basis and of quality satisfactory for exploitation. For the first week to 10 days NPIC received many missions on a piece-meal basis (that is, part of the mission at a time) and sometimes received only one copy of the film. With so many missions and so many cameras this resulted in awkward problems for the exploiters. The situation was finally corrected so that NPIC received the ON and one DP for each mission and these covered the entire mission. To respond adequately to varied intelligence community requirements, one positive and one negative copy of the film must be available at the same time at NPIC.

3. NPIC had to be responsive to basically 5 different types of requirements:



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4. The bottleneck for work at the NPIC was not the direct PI work itself, but the support problems of film handling, lab processing, graphics preparation and coordination of reports and requirements. It is much more difficult than is commonly realized to handle large quantities of film, keep track of what targets are where, and coordinate this with the various types of reports and individual requirements. From an organizational point of view the following items are pertinent:

a. Our Operations Staff requires expansion and the inclusion of at least one senior military individual.

b. We have to be organized in such a way that we can go through sustained periods of overtime even if this means

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SUBJECT: Lessons Learned from the Cuban Crisis

a few extra key people who are not fully occupied during normal operations.

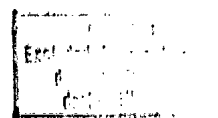
c. We require a stronger command line in the organization, with respect to handling PI's. Our Ad Hoc arrangements got us through the crisis with no major errors, but a more formal line-type organization would have simplified some of our management problems.

5. The above changes in T/O and organization are adequately covered in the proposed letter to DOD which we forwarded to the DD/I on 2 November 1962. Early action on this paper is therefore indicated.

6. It is not clear to NPIC just how daily photo reconnaissance requirements have been or are being determined. It seems to us that some of the missions have been unnecessary and not responsive to requirements, and that others have been flown in such poor weather that useful results could not be expected. It is believed that COMOR might well investigate the handling of reconnaissance requirements during the Cuban crisis with a view to formalizing the procedure for the future. However, it is probable that our comment is being made in ignorance of certain requirements or how the controls were actually established.

7. One serious problem involves telephone and cable communications from the Steuart Building. With respect to telephones, in the past our requests for secure phones have been turned down. The Cuban crisis demonstrated again our very urgent requirement for a number of secure telephones. Classified information undoubtedly was passed over non-secure phones during this period, and there is no way of knowing how many transmissions were garbled because individuals were trying to double-talk. Some day this will lead to a serious error. With respect to cable communications, we initially encountered difficulty because the basic PI reports were so lengthy that they could not be transmitted as "Operations Immediate" without causing bottlenecks. Eventually this was resolved by preparing a preliminary summary report which was released as "Operations Immediate", with the detailed reports following as "Priority". Whether this was satisfactory to the end consumers is not known.

8. Most of the problems encountered were resolved during the Cuban crisis so that operations were proceeding smoothly after 1 - 2 weeks. However, action is indicated in the following areas to improve our procedure for future crises:



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a. Early forwarding of our proposed re-organization letter to DOD so we can proceed to staff and organize properly.

b. Discussion with DOD to attempt to decrease the requirement for simultaneous prints and vu-graphs during an emergency.

c. Early provision of secure telephones for NPIC.



ARTHUR C. LUNDAHL
Director

National Photographic Interpretation Center

NPIC/OD



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5 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: All members of the Senior Staff

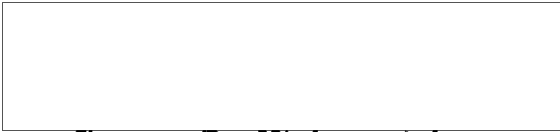
SUBJECT : Post Mortem on Lessons Learned

1. The past few weeks, during which all elements of the Agency have operated in a sustained crisis situation, have given all of us a chance to observe where we have moved smoothly and where there have been deficiencies.

2. So that we can benefit from this experience while it is still fresh in our minds, I would like any member of the Senior Staff to prepare notes on problems or deficiencies in our system encountered or observed together with suggestions on how to overcome them.

3. This office will pull together your comments for the consideration of the DCI and DDCI as well as for consideration at Senior Staff and Executive Committee meetings.

4. I realize that the pressure of work may make it impossible to collect such information quickly, but I would suggest that your views reach this office as early as possible, but in any event not later than 1 December 1962.


Lyman B. Kirkpatrick
Executive Director

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